

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 5, Vol 15, No. 7

NATIONAL JESUIT NEWS  
April 1986

## Students Face Probation in Fordham Protest

By John Dear, S.J.

**BRONX, N.Y.**—Nine Fordham University students were placed on disciplinary probation by the University Judiciary Council following their February 13th protest against the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) on-campus employment recruiting drive. William Casey, CIA director, is a graduate of the Bronx, New York school. The nine students sat-in at the Office of Career Planning and Placement to protest interviews by the CIA recruiter.

More than 40 students held a vigil in the hallways outside. After two hours, the University administration decided to cancel the rest of the CIA interviews and asked the CIA recruiter to leave.

The students, many of whom were members of the Catholic peace group Pax Christi, were protesting "the immoral activities of the CIA, such as the CIA's support of the contras' war in Nicaragua." Three scholastics at Murray-Weigel Hall requested to participate in the nonviolent civil disobedience but were refused permission. Nine scholastics, however, did take part in the legal protest of CIA recruiting.

The theme of the protest, inspired by the Nuclear Train Campaign, was "Love will stop the CIA: Accept Responsibility." The students tried to make it clear that they objected to Fordham University's facilitation of recruiting by the CIA on Fordham's campus. "By continuing to encourage students to interview with the agency and facilitating recruiting by the CIA at Fordham, the University legitimates the Agency's activities and provides a practical endorsement of the CIA," the protesting students argued.

Before the interviews were held, the CIA recruiter gave an overall presentation to a large gathering of students interested in working for the CIA. Student protesters, carrying signs and leaflets, attended the presentation and asked questions about the morality of the Agency's support of the contras who are fighting against the people of Nicaragua; the CIA backed coups in Chile, Guatemala, and elsewhere; and reports of continued illegal surveillance of American citizens by the CIA. The recruiter, Mr. James Fitzgerald, insisted that moral questions were "not related to employment" with the CIA.

Interviews with the CIA representative were scheduled for the remainder of the day at the Office of Career Planning and Placement, but were called off by vice-president for student affairs, Joseph McGowan, in response to the sit-in.

A statement handed out by the nine students who sat-in explained the reason for their action. "If we are ever to free ourselves from our slavery to systemic evil, we must withdraw our cooperation from it. That is what we have come to attempt today: to demonstrate that we have recognized our complicity in the injustice of our nation—especially as instantiated in the activities of the CIA—and to say that we will cooperate no longer. As people of conscience, we can no longer stand on the sidelines of history and watch the wholesale disregard for the human rights of our sisters and brothers around the world."

Two weeks after their action, the nine students presented their case before the University Judiciary Council, arguing that they were justified in their action, that in fact the CIA should be brought to trial for its

crimes. Vice President McGowan, acting as prosecutor for the University, argued that the students should be suspended for their action, and expelled from Fordham if the offense were repeated. Nevertheless, Dr. McGowan praised the character of the accused and the "polite," nonviolent quality of their action.

Character witnesses for the students, including Fr. Ned Murphy, S.J. and two of Fordham's philosophy professors, described the students as "Fordham's best and brightest." Dr. McGowan declined to cross-examine any of the witnesses who testified on behalf of the accused. The nine students presented almost two hundred pages of evidence, largely from the World Court, demonstrating where, when and how the CIA had violated international law.

The campaign to stop recruitment by the CIA at

Fordham began in March, 1985, when the CIA came to campus and were met by student protesters. Following that initial protest, which consisted of leafletting and picketing, several meetings between the University administration and representatives of the protesting students were held. These meetings resulted, at the protesters' request, in a temporary moratorium on CIA recruiting at Fordham. Discussion of the issue during the moratorium was very intense: both sides of the issue were debated in both a public forum and in the student newspapers.

In late December, 1985, Fr. Denis Moran, S.J., assistant dean for student affairs, an-

nounced that the University had decided to allow the CIA to continue to recruit at Fordham. He said that the University's decision was not based on any moral judgment of the activities of the CIA, but on the fact that Boston College and Georgetown University, other Jesuit schools, allow CIA recruiting.

The students prepared for their action by following a nonviolent discipline based upon the philosophies of Mohandas Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Their ten-point covenant of nonviolence included the pledges "to walk and talk in the manner of love; not to engage in violence of fist, tongue or heart; and to be open, friendly, and respectful toward all, including police officers, security guards and other officials."

Fr. Moran, S.J., said that another CIA recruiter may be invited back to Fordham in October or November, 1986.

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